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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

THURSDAY, June 22, 1933.

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Subject: "Home Economics at a Century of Progress." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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From the magazines, the newspapers and the radio you've been hearing news of the many interesting sights at the World's Fair now in progress at Chicago. But perhaps you haven't yet heard about the exhibits there sent from the Bureau of Home Economics at Washington, D.C. which are of special interest to women. Whether you plan to attend the Fair or not, I think you'll enjoy hearing about these displays to show the progress made by scientists in subjects concerning the home--in cookery, in clothing and textiles, in nutrition and so on.

But before I describe these exhibits and tell you where to look for them at this Fair in the year 1933, let me mention a little history--let's go back to the World's Fair in 1893. Home Economics was represented there, forty years ago, and the exhibit created a sensation. It was a little white frame house with a front porch and flower boxes at the windows, and it was called "Rumford Kitchen" in honor of Count Rumford who was a pioneer in the application of science to the cooking of food. Mrs. Ellen H. Richards and Mrs. Mary Hinman Abel, who had charge of the exhibit, were pioneers also. A few years later they organized the home economics movement. But back in '93 no one had yet coined the words home economics, and many of the visitors to the Rumford Kitchen heard mention there for the first time of the science of nutrition and food chemistry. A feature of the kitchen was the serving of low-cost luncheons with food values all worked out in calories and grams of protein, fat and carbohydrates. The idea of economizing on food wasn't any newer then than it is now, but the idea of calories was brand new.

So much for history. So much for the World's Fair of '93. We've learned a lot about food values since that date. The exhibits this year show many of the things we've learned. Take the exhibit at the Dairy Building for example. This illustrates what dairy products contribute to the well-balanced diet both at low cost and at liberal cost. An illuminated chart gives the percentages of the different food values, including the vitamins, which no one had even thought of back in 1893. Near this food value chart you'll see pictures and displayed in very modern manner the foods the family of five needs for a week to insure good nutrition. Today, as the exhibit shows, you can buy dairy products in many different forms--fresh milk, evaporated milk, dried milk, cream and ice cream, butter and cheese. That's another sign of progress.

Over in the Meat Industry Building you'll find another exhibit. This one shows how specialists at the Bureau of Home Economics are applying science to meat cookery. There you'll find a big case filled with platters of different cuts of

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beef, pork and lamb, all cooked and garnished to the queen's taste. When you see them, I know you'll think they are real meats, just ready to serve, which are keeping by some marvellous storage method. But they really are wax models, made and painted by an artist in the Department of Agriculture who copied them from meats cooked in the laboratories. They are so realistic that they fooled even Secretary Wallace when he came over to see them before they started out to the fair.

Above the case of wax models, you can watch a series of lantern slides all carefully colored giving the principles of cooking meat according to the cut. Still another series of wax models illustrates the effect of different oven temperatures on beef roasts of the same grade of meat. You can see just what happens to a beef roast first, if you use a slow oven with a constant moderate temperature then if you use a very hot oven, and finally an oven which is hot at the start and moderate at the finish. The real pan drippings are there in jars right beside the meat, so you can see just how much was lost in each way of cooking.

Now let's go over to the Social Science Building. There you'll find a booth which shows the contrast between a home of a hundred years ago with the modern home, and showing how industry now does the baking and spinning and weaving which each family used to do for itself. The contributions which home economics makes through research and teaching is part of the progress.

I've told you now about three of the home economics exhibits. But still another one is set up in the Government Building in the space assigned to the Department of Agriculture. This exhibit symbolizes in its way the aim of home economics research. Here is another house with light streaming hospitably from its windows. Looking in one window, you'll see the family planning their budget, and figuring what part of the income to spend for food, clothing and other expenses. Through another window you look into the dining room and see the family seated around the table. A series of moving cards above them carries the story of the well-balanced diet. The scene in another window illustrates how textile research aids the homemaker in selecting good fabrics. The plan of the modern kitchen designed for convenience fills the fourth window. And on the front door is a legend that sums it all up-- a quotation from the writings of Mrs. Richards the same Mrs. Richards who took such a prominent part in the World's Fair of forty years ago. This quotation reads: "Home economics stands for the utilization of the resources of modern science to improve home life."

So don't forget, when you come to the Fair in Chicago this summer, to look for the four exhibits from the Bureau of Home Economics.

